

**Tsarkov, Alex**

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**From:** jyll kashmann [kashwoman@hotmail.com]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 24, 2011 12:01 AM

**To:** Tsarkov, Alex

**Subject:** RE: Written Testimony in Support of HB6620, HB1205, HB1208 Condo Bills; For Public Hearing 3/25/11

Date: Thu, 24 March 2011

Dear Judiciary Committee,

My name is Jyll A. Kashmann. My father, Joseph Robert Kashmann, is the owner of one condominium unit where I currently reside which is located at 11A Robin Road in West Hartford Connecticut, 06119. I have been legally named as the proxy holder for him and it is in this capacity in which I write.

I am writing to urge you to support An Act Establishing an Office of Condominium Obudsman. The reason I strongly urge you to establish the act is because ever since I moved in to my current condominium residence, I have come up against problems with the association and the people, (all male) who run it.

From day one, I was treated with disrespect by the maintenance person. All residents were expected to vote yes to give him a large bonus for Christmases, even though his attitude towards me and at least some others, was less than professional and at one point he swore about me on the telephone over an issue concerning my electricity usage, about which he turned out to be incorrect. I was harassed for issues with my garage door and yet given no guidance regarding the rules or expectations in this matter. No one ever gave me a personal orientation of any sort about how things were done in the residence and though I moved in during the month of December, there was no association meeting held until the following October.

Until very recently, for the approximately 5 years in which I have lived at 11A Robin Road, we had only had one association meeting per year and most of the agenda had always been pre-determined so that it was nearly impossible to get a new issue onto the agenda for discussion. Just last year, they finally agreed to have an extra meeting in which it was decided that we would elect two new board members to add to the three that had been running the board for many years.

The election process involved writing your name on your ballot, so it was not even secret and two more men were elected to the board, though the majority of residents are women. These men are all of a similar background and tend to agree on most all decisions which means that many owners have stopped even attending the meetings feeling that they actually have no say at all. When issues do come up, they are often brushed under the table or dismissed with some excuse. Those who dissent are either not taken seriously or ignored if possible.

Over the years, I and some of the other residents have experienced problems that were either not resolved or resolved very slowly when action could have been taken much more quickly. Some of the other problems that I have come up against have included, noise pollution from oversized lawn mowers being used early in the morning by the maintenance people, residue from mowers and leaf blowers coming into my windows all summer because the mowing and blowing was done nearly every day at random times, leaning to forced inhalation of toxins or keeping windows closed in all seasons. Lighting issues have also been problematic and either slowly resolved or in some cases unresolved.

I had a major problem with my electricity wires having being hooked up to the wrong meter and it took me over one year to prove it to the president of the association and get his help in resolving the problem with the CL&P. I was actually being billed for my upstairs neighbor's use of electricity, rather than my own. This ultimately resulted in a large refund for me, once I was able to prove the problem, but that took two years to complete. The problem had been caused by the person who had lived in my unit before me.

Also, in my first year in this condo I had a bad situation with a large number of ants coming in and was told that it was just normal. Eventually, I was able to prove that they were coming in from the basement because there was an opening in my kitchen floor that had been left by a previous owner who had done

3/24/2011

some of his own handywork. Once the area was caulked properly, by the maintenance man, whom I had to beg to do it, the problem was resolved, but it took months for this situation to get properly diagnosed. First they just sent in an exterminator and then I had loads of dead ants.

I could go on and mention many other issues both small and larger. Most got resolved only after I figured out what to do and after I nagged someone in charge until they paid attention. Even now, I have a problem with scaldingly hot water in my kitchen sink and a lack of heat in my unit except at 3-6 am, when it is unbelievably hot. They completely refuse to do anything about this because, they say, no one else has issued such a complaint.

These are just some of the problems that have been part of my experience with living here and mostly it is the anxiety and disrespect that has taken a toll on my tolerance level. I know that in some other condo situations, problems are resolved and dealt with differently. Thus, I do think that having a place to turn with a grievance would not only help individual owners, but would keep associations abreast of peoples' legal rights and they would not be as likely to target someone who does not just go along with the way things have always been done. I hope you will strongly consider how important this issue is for condo owners. You should realize that some people are just too intimidated to even ask for help for fear of retribution. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Jyll Kashmann